

March 15, 1994

Chris Kimball, Program Chair
History Department
Augsburg College
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454

Dear Professor Kimball:

Enclosed is a proposal for a paper to be delivered at your 29th Annual Northern Great Plains History Conference this autumn.

I am a professor of history with a Ph.d. from the U of Illinois in 1964. I have taught history courses here for many years, published in and researched the Kennedy years. At present I am working on a book concerned with the first official investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy, a study in the institutional structure of government operating in a time of crisis.

Sincerely.

David R. Wrone
Professor of History
History Dept UWSP
Stevens Point WI
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The Curse of Theory.

History and the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

For thirty years writers have produced books on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy that purport to provide us with the historical reality of what happened to the thirty fifth president. With a handful of exceptions their efforts have been consistently marked by theoretical explanations, the use of theory to explain the facts of the assassination. This approach has an intrinsic public appeal in attempting to resolve issues and questions circulating around the murder, but does not meet the criteria of history properly conceived: a solid objective factual explanation.

I seek to review a good sampling of the dominant theories on the assassination of President Kennedy, relate each of these to the historical context and the factual circumstances as found in the evidentiary base. After that I wish to discuss what the evidence suggests happened to the President, putting it in the context of a historical approach to the subject.

This is not a paper meant to solve the assassination. Far from it. It is meant to survey the subject from the point of view of history and the historical method and demonstrate that theories have been a major impediment to our historical understanding. The subject must be conceived as any historical subject ought to be conceived, documents, research, weighing of evidence, skepticism, analysis, and careful conclusions.

I have spent many years studying the assassination of President Kennedy and have published articles and reviews and a standard bibliography on the subject. At present I am working hard to finish my research on the official investigation of the assassination.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Twenty-Ninth Annual

Northern Great Plains History Conference

**St. Paul, Minnesota
28 September through 1 October 1994**

**Co-sponsored by Augsburg College and the
Minnesota Historical Society.**

**Proposals for papers, panels, and sessions in *all areas* of
history and history-related subjects are welcome. Proposals,
consisting of a one-page prospectus and a brief vita, should be
sent on or before 31 March 1994 to:**

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please post